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# THE BAPTIST Record

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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Turner



Futral



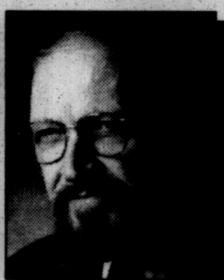
Luter



Register



Clark



Miller

## '99 Miss. Baptist Convention program set

"Celebrating God's Timeless Word" is the theme of the 1999 Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) on Oct. 26-27 at First Church, Jackson.

Among the highlights of the convention will be election of a new leader to succeed two-term MBC president Dean Register, pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg; and a pair of Bible Treasures brought by popular speaker/author Calvin Miller, professor of preaching and pastoral studies at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham.

Messengers will pack preaching, music, reports, and business matters into four sessions, beginning at 8:25 a.m. on October 26 and concluding at 11:15 a.m. on October 27. The election of the new president is scheduled for 10:40 a.m. on October 26.

The results of that election will be announced at 1:50 p.m. on October 26, followed by a second ballot if needed.

Miller's Bible Treasures are scheduled for 9:10 a.m. and 2:10 p.m. on October 26.

Randall W. Turner, pastor of First Church, Laurel, will preach the convention sermon at 7:15 p.m. on October 26.

He has served in a number of denominational roles, including membership on the Annuity Board, credentials committee, and committee on committees on the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) level, and on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), committee on committees, The Baptist Record advisory committee, education commission, and committee on nominations on the state convention level.

Turner also served as president of the Mississippi Baptist Pastors' Conference in 1994, and is currently chairman of the education commission.

Fred Luter Jr., pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, will preach at 10:15 a.m. on October 26. Since he assumed the Franklin Avenue Church pastorate in 1986, membership has grown from 65 people to over 3,000 people.

Luter was the first African-American elected to the post of second vice-presi-

dent of the SBC (1996), and the first African-American to serve on the executive board of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Oklahoma evangelist Leslie Clark will preach at 10:45 a.m. on October 27. Clark, a former director of missions, state convention worker, and pastor of six churches, has written lessons for the Native American Sunday School literature, and also served as a home missionary in Louisiana.

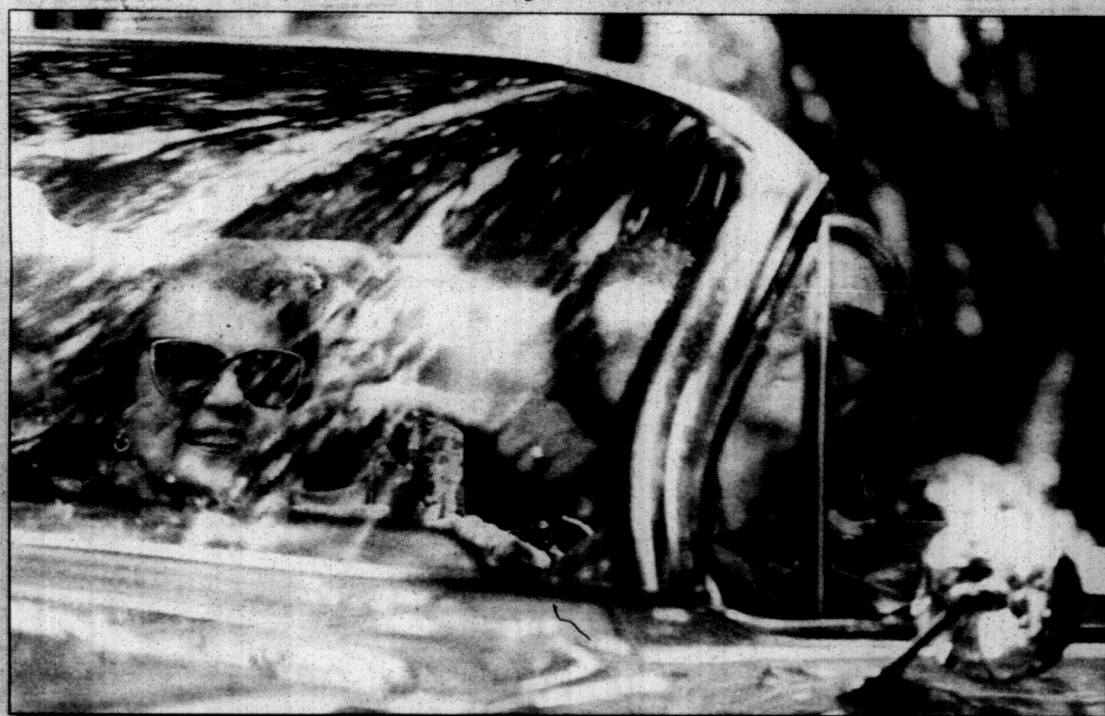
Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer, will deliver the convention board emphasis at 8 p.m. on Oct. 26.

The first convention business session is scheduled for 2:35 p.m. on October 26. The proposed MBCB budget for the year 2000 will be presented at that time by Gary Richardson, chairman of the MBCB budget committee and pastor of First Church, West Point.

The proposed 2000 budget will be voted on by messengers during the second business session at 9:40 a.m. on October 27.

The complete schedule for the 1999 Mississippi Baptist Convention will be published in the August 19 issue of The Baptist Record.

## Out for an afternoon drive



Gayle Smith (driving), Lynda Harrison, and Maurine Harper listen intently as the set crew gives instructions prior to the filming of their scene for the "Our Prayer" series of television and radio broadcast advertisements being produced by the church information support team of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The ads, which feature Mississippi Baptists in everyday settings, will begin airing in the next few weeks on stations that are members of the Mississippi Broadcasters Association. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

## WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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## Miss. CP ahead for year

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,295,634 through the Cooperative Program in July, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which disburses the funds.

Though the July 1999 amount is slightly less than that given in July 1998 by the amount of \$133,146, total giving this year is ahead of 1998 giving for the same period.

Total giving thus far in 1999 is \$16,399,379. This is \$817,217, or 5.24%, more than the \$15,582,163 given January-July 1998.

Also, pro rata giving is ahead of budget requirements for this year. The 1999 Cooperative Program budget of \$26,607,890, if divided into 12 equal amounts, would require \$15,521,269 for this point in the budget year. Giving so far is \$878,110, or 5.66%, ahead of that amount.

The Cooperative Program helps fund North American and International missionaries, six seminaries, and the summer work of hundreds of college and seminary students at Mississippi's Baptist encampments at Central Hills Retreat, Camp Garaywa, and Gulfshore Assembly.

## SBC CP shows increases

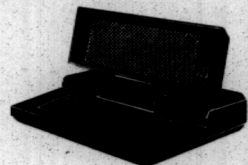
NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) receipts for July, and the fiscal year's total, increased more than 5% over comparable periods for the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For the month of July 1999, CP receipts totaled \$14,550,691 compared to July 1998 of \$13,797,941, an increase of \$752,749 or 5.46%. For the SBC fiscal year, October through July, CP gifts totaled \$140,363,718 compared to the previous year's total of \$132,927,617, an increase of \$7,436,100 or 5.59%.

Designated gifts for July 1999 totaled \$6,408,273 compared to July 1998 of \$6,765,560, a decrease of \$357,287 or 5.28%. For the SBC fiscal year, designated gifts totaled \$145,327,832 compared to the previous year's total of \$144,364,306, an increase of \$963,526 or .67%. For the SBC's Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the July CP receipts were \$1,633,547 over the monthly required figure of \$12,917,143, an increase of 12.65%. For the year to date, the \$129,171,435 required for the 10 months thus far of the SBC fiscal year has been exceeded by \$11,192,282.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Missrecord@aol.com

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# Focus on the real enemy

**P**T. Barnum had it right. The legendary circus huckster may have died 109 years ago, but people will still believe almost anything. A few Mississippi Baptists are apparently determined to prove that fact.

The tired, old tale about corporate giant Procter and Gamble being a tool of Satan is once again in circulation around the state. The revived rumor has surfaced this time in Pearl, Brandon, and Batesville, according to telephone calls received last week in the offices of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC).

The rumor has an infinite number of variations, but the premise is that the president of Procter and Gamble (several have been named in different rumors) appeared on a syndicated television talk show (again, several have been named in different rumors), where he announced that he was a follower of Satan and that a certain amount of the company's profits were dedicated as a tithe to the Church of Satan.

The company says the rumors are completely unfounded, as none of their presidents has ever appeared on a television talk show. All the major talk show hosts, on whose shows these various Procter and Gamble presidents have allegedly appeared, have also issued written denials that such a show ever took place.

Even evangelist Billy Graham and Southern Baptist Convention President Paige Patterson, who also serves as president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., have written that they are persuaded the rumors are baseless.

In some cases Procter and Gamble has traced the rumors to competitors, and the company has a perfect record in winning or

favorably settling lawsuits against people who have spread the rumors.

The phenomenon of rapidly-spreading untruths such as the Procter and Gamble stories has been studied by researchers who have tagged the rumors as "urban legends," in the updated tradition of centuries-old verbal transmission of folk tales from one generation to another.

Christians should be especially cautious about spreading these unfounded rumors, because doing so can make us look foolish and harm our witness when the stories are proven false. Urban legends are virtually impossible to document, and gullible people simply accept the version transmitted to them without getting proof for themselves.

When Christians take action against companies, products, and activities we feel are contrary to our faith — a legitimate and perfectly legal action on our part — we must base our actions on concrete facts.

Don't believe everything you hear by word of mouth. Demand proof from the person who tells you. Ask for names and addresses of sources. Don't accept, "Well, my second-cousin-twice-removed who lives up north said he saw it on a videotape." How ridiculous.

Many manufacturers include a corporate address and toll-free telephone number on their product labels. In Procter and Gamble's case, the company has a web

"WELL, MY MORAL AUTHORITY  
IS DOCTOR LAURA! AND  
DOCTOR LAURA SAYS...."



page dedicated to quashing these false rumors ([www.pg.com/rumor](http://www.pg.com/rumor)). Call or write, and demand the facts.

Let's not waste our time fighting enemies that don't exist. We do have a proven enemy, and all our energy should be focused on fighting his influence by ensuring that every person on the face of the earth has an opportunity to hear about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

That's a big enough assignment in the time we have left before Jesus returns. Let's get busy!

## A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE:



### The search for the significant church

By Carl M. White, Associate Editor

**I** have a confession to make. Over the years as a pastor, and even now as a denominational servant, I have lusted over pulpits.

That's the truth. Sometimes, after hearing the preacher from one of these churches, I would think "I can do that as well as he can."

Of course, those churches are always big, rich, growing, and well known. They are what one of my pastoral friends calls "significant churches."

We used to spend hours talking about significant churches, especially when a pulpit would come open. Inevitably it resulted in letters of recommendation being written and resumes being sent, with the hope that one of the significant churches would come looking.

A twinge of guilt usually followed those sessions, especially after returning to the office and the list of phone messages waiting, or the committee meeting that night, or the half-written sermon on the desk waiting for completion. It felt like I had somehow been unfaithful to my current church.

At one point the search for the significant church became so overwhelming that I allowed — even encouraged — friends to send my resume, which resulted in a few phone calls and one interview.

I came home from that inter-

view an emotional wreck. What is God's will? Is this God leading or is this ambition? What about my current church? What about my family?

Fortunately, that committee advised me, "Don't call us, we'll call you." I have never handled rejection well. Hindsight makes clear this was not God's will, yet the pain was real.

As is often true in life, pain motivated a search for relief. As a result, I sought the face of God with renewed earnestness, probing the issue of his will, the theology behind the call, and the place of personal ambition in ministry.

While my experience with God cannot be counted as normative for all, I reached a very strong conclusion. The only significant church there is, is the one to which God calls you.

From that point on, I was through with the resume game and wasted no more time spec-

ulating about churches. My focus was going to be the people God called me to shepherd, and that was enough until (if and when) he called me someplace else.

Some students finish seminary with a carefully laid plan for career advancement. They accept that first small church with no intention of staying. They network, lobby, and flood the marketplace with resumes in search of the significant church. One pastor I know did careful demographic studies of four southern states and would not allow his resume to go anywhere but those areas he had tagged as destined for rapid growth. He now pastors one of those big churches.

Some would point his way and say, "He did it!" I would ask, "Did what?" Blind, market-driven ambition may work well for career advancement in the secular workplace, but does it have a place in the Kingdom of God?

It seems to me the New Testament has a lot to say about humility, meekness, the last being first, the first being last, taking up crosses, dying to self, and service. I don't find any listings on my computer Bible's search engine under the entry "ministerial career advancement."

In Matt. 18, Jesus' disciples asked a question about ambition: Who was the greatest in the Kingdom? In response Jesus pointed to a child. If you had to produce a photograph of innocence, naivete, and blind trust, what would be better than the picture of a child? Jesus was saying that in the realm of faith and kingdom service, child-likeness is a desirable attribute.

Pastoring is a tough vocation. You've got to be strong, preach powerful sermons, and provide dynamic leadership. Perhaps, though, there would be less conflict in our churches if pastors showed more child-like character than Fortune 500 CEO characteristics.

Bigger is only bigger, not better. Significance in ministry is found in a relationship with Christ and service to others, not in relation to location or size.

Thus, to my colleagues in the ministry I say, be happy where you are called. Love those he called you to lead. Serve the Lord with all your heart.

He will handle the rest.



# Newest missionaries warned of hardships

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — Southern Baptists' 70 newest missionaries were challenged to overlook the hardships that lie ahead and instead concentrate on the goal during their appointment service July 29 at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico.

"You are going to encounter a world of suffering, of poverty, of overwhelming need," International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin told the missionaries.

"Like the disciples, you also will encounter hostile religious traditions," he said. "You will be subjected to threats and restrictive government policies."

Yet, despite those obstacles, Rankin said the IMB is sending them forth with the prayer and hope that "you will be so filled with the love of God and his passion for all the peoples of the world to know him and worship him that, like the disciples, you cannot help but speak the things which you have seen and heard and know of Jesus" (Acts 4:20).

The appointment of the 56 career and associate missionaries and 14 apprentice missionaries was the crowning moment for the first-ever International Missions Week at the conference center, which drew 1,815 registrants, including the largest-ever assembly of missionaries in one place — 222 missionaries on stateside assignment (formerly known as furlough), plus the 70 appointees.

It also was the largest appointment of apprentice missionaries, a new category established two years ago for people who meet all the criteria for career missionary appointment except sufficient ministry experience.

Apprentices gain their work experience

overseas, and four years later are appointed as career missionaries. Thirteen apprentices were appointed.

As the new missionaries each shared his or her testimony, they collectively painted a picture of the IMB today: multiethnic, multigenerational, multi-talented.

One missionary is 60. Other missionaries barely reached the age of 24, when appointment as a career missionary is first possible.

One missionary is a former agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. One missionary flew a helicopter in Operation Desert Storm.

Another missionary once owned a pizza restaurant. Other missionaries included a doctor, pastors, homemakers, a veterinarian, ski enthusiasts, videographers, and teachers.

They all credited God as the source of their calls to serve overseas, but

actually meeting and interacting with international missionaries on stateside assignment stood out as each shared his or her testimony in the service.

"In 1978, I was discussing with my great-great-uncle, Bailis Orrick, his call to missions," said new missionary Larry Singleton. "Knowing that I couldn't be happy unless I was in God's will, he discreetly slipped me a piece of paper which said, 'Seek God, not happiness.'"

"Today, I am very happy to be a part of the Karamojong team in Uganda, still seeking God."

For Bob and Rhonda Besco, returning to Glorieta for the appointment service carried special mean-

ing. In 1996, they made a public commitment to overseas missions service at Glorieta during a Jericho missions conference.

Each new appointee shared a passion exemplified by a comment made by one couple: "We are called to do whatever it takes to reach a people group in Central and Southern Asia."

The appointment service began with a stirring video presentation of "They Sing Glory," performed by the Stone Brothers at the recent Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta.

Interspersed in the video were photos from dozens of people groups throughout the world.

The video impressed upon the audience of more than 2,000 the fact that someday people from every nation, tribe, and people group on the face of the earth will sing eternal praises to God in heaven.

"That's why God has called you to the ends of the earth," Rankin said at the conclusion of the video.

"That's why you are being sent to the nations — so that the words of the Psalmist (Psalm 22:27) will be fulfilled — 'All the ends of the earth shall turn to the Lord, and all the families of nations shall worship him, for the kingdom is the Lord's and he rules over the nations.'"

Joined by the audience, the 70 appointees shouted, "Amen."



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# THE BAPTIST Record

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**VOICE OF EXPERIENCE** — New missionaries Larry (left) and Terry Singleton (middle), who will serve in Uganda, talk with a veteran missionary during an outdoor reception at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico. The Singletons were among 56 career and associate missionaries and 14 apprentice missionaries appointed. (BP photo by Roy M. Burroughs)



## Looking back

### 10 years ago

First Church, Nettleton, holds a note-burning ceremony for the \$339,000 sanctuary that was completed in 1985. The church used the "Together We Build" program and had to borrow only \$200,000 for the project. George C. Johnson Jr. is pastor.

### 25 years ago

Washington Association names Roy Raddin as director of missions. Raddin was pastor of Second Church, Greenville. He has also pastored several other churches in Mississippi. The Hattiesburg native is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton and New Orleans Seminary in New Orleans.

### 50 years ago

Construction begins this month at Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College on the Garrett Hall of Fine Arts. It will house the departments of music, speech, dramatics, and art. A gift from Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd F. Garrett of Corinth and other friends made the building possible.

## Study plan tops 500,000 mark

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — More than half a million Southern Baptists are developing leadership and ministry skills and growing in their faith through the Christian Growth Study Plan, according to statistics recently released by LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tenn.

Morlee Maynard, ministry coordination specialist in the LifeWay church resources division, said 541,966 Southern Baptist men, women, teenagers, and children were participating in the plan as of May 1999.

In the last church calendar year (1997-98), enrollees represented 26,690 churches, an increase of 2,805 over the previous year. In addition, 67,438 new participants joined the plan last year.

Formerly known as the Church Study Course, the plan was renamed the Christian Growth Study Plan in 1996. It is coordinated by LifeWay and supported by several other Southern Baptist entities, including the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, and SBC Seminary Extension.

For more information about the plan and to receive a free catalog, call (615) 251-2525 or write to: Christian Growth Study Plan, LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 36234-0117.

**SET APART** — Twenty-six couples and four singles were set apart for overseas missions service through the International Mission Board in a July 29 appointment service. Fifty-six career and associate missionaries and 14 apprentice missionaries were appointed during the first-ever International Missions Week at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico. (BP photo by Sandy King)



# AB insurance plans to see increase in 2000

BALTIMORE (BP and local reports) — Annuity Board (AB) trustees were advised during their Aug. 2-3 meeting in Baltimore that a rate increase is likely by the first of next year for two of the board's health insurance programs.

increases for most employers in the Employer Security Program have also been minimal. We continue to make every effort to keep medical rate increases low in the face of steadily rising health care costs."

Mississippi AB representative Robin Nichols recommended church budget planners anticipate a rate increase in the range of ten percent per person.

"They have told us it should not be over that amount," he said.

For more information, contact Nichols at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3226 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. E-mail: rnichols@mbcb.org

William T. "Dale" Patterson, a member of First Church, Jackson, was welcomed to his first AB trustee meeting since replacing Jack Colvin of Jackson, who served two terms on the trustee board and was not eligible for reappointment.

In other business, board treasurer Jeffrey P. Billinger reported that the broad stock market rally in the second quarter drove net income to the second-largest first-half-year performance in the board's history. Total assets of the board grew to just over \$7.5 billion by June 30.

Benefit payments and withdrawals for the first six months totaled \$190 million, up

15.4% over the same period last year. A total of 28,903 participants/beneficiaries received funded benefit payments and 2,104 received installment benefit payments.

Concerning the board's relief programs to needy retired ministers and widowed spouses, as of June 30 a total of \$2,439,081 was distributed through the board's relief channels, an increase of 6.6% over the first six months of 1998.

The first Adopt An Annuitant Sunday was celebrated on June 27. More than 1,250 churches requested inserts for their weekly worship bulletins. At the end of the first six months of 1999, there were 914 individuals or couples receiving supplemental assistance grants and 2,661 receiving the \$75 Adopt An Annuitant benefit.

The trustees' relief committee considered 131 relief requests. Trustees approved 64 two-year monthly grants, one three-month monthly grant, one five-month monthly grant, two six-month monthly grants, one one-time grant, and 23 two-year expense grants. Thirty-five applications were declined for being outside guidelines. Ninety-seven individuals have been added to the Adopt An Annuitant roll during 1999.

The next scheduled meeting of the Annuity Board trustees will be Nov. 1-2 in Dallas.



## ANNUITY BOARD OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Trustees were told preliminary findings indicate a Jan. 1, 2000, rate increase will be announced in the next several weeks for participants in the board's Personal Security Program and Employer Security Program medical plans including HMO and Medicare primary plans.

Doug Day, managing director of insurance services, said, "We have been fortunate in the past several years to have experienced only minimal rate increases in the Personal Security Program, while our consultants indicate the industry has seen increases of 20%-30% since 1994. Rate

### THE WORST THREE ANSWERS TO A NOMINATING COMMITTEE

All across our convention, nominating committees are hard at work. You talk about work — a church nominating committee works! If they do not work, it is not likely that the church as an organization is going to work. It is a work of intense prayer for God's guidance. It is a work that involves sensitivity to try and find the right people, with the right gifts, to fit into the right place, where both they and the ministry they perform will be blessed of God.

Sometimes the nominating committee is involved in decisions that bring change, and that is not easy. At other times this committee is involved in a decision to avoid change, and that also is not easy. Sometimes a nominating committee is caught "slap-dab-in-the-middle" of stuff, like when a Sunday School class is telling committee members that they want a new teacher while at the same time telling the teacher, "We want you to stay." That is not easy. Thank God for quality, thoughtful, and spiritually sensitive nominating committee members.

While space will not allow me to list the top ten worst answers you can give to a nominating committee, let me just list three of the top worst:

**Number Three: "No!"** More often than not when a person is asked to accept an area of responsibility it comes after much thought and prayer and sometimes the immediate response is, "No, I will not do that." It is interesting as you analyze our "No" response to an opportunity of service, because it generally comes from some one of us who wants God to say "yes." "Yes, I will save you from your sins." "Yes, I will take care of you every



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

day." "Yes, I will pour out blessings upon your life." We want God to say "Yes," "Yes," "Yes," to all of our requests, yet we are able to turn around and say a quick, unqualified, "No!"

For some folks it does not matter what they are being asked to do or when, the answer remains the same — "No." "No" to teaching. "No" to ushering. "No" to serving on a committee. Sometimes it appears as though folks attend church just for the privilege of saying "No." Granted, sometimes "No" is a proper and right answer, but I would also venture to say that it is not appropriate nearly as much as we use it.

**Number Two: "I'll pray about it."** Now, the nominating committee is not the only group of folks in the church who needs to be praying. Those who are asked to serve need to sense and know that God is guiding them and wants to use them. More often than we probably would like to admit, "I'll pray about it," is just one of those Baptist "smoke-screens" that we throw up until we can figure out why we can't do something. I've wondered sometimes if people say, "I'll pray about it," just so they'll have time to think up a good excuse; or, they think if they pray about it long enough, the committee will forget about them and go on to someone else.

Have you ever thought about the fact that we rarely feel compelled to pray about receiving

good things from God, and yet we turn around to spend agonizing days in prayerful contemplation about receiving an assignment to do something for God? If the Lord were to ask you, "Would you like to have good health?" or, "Would you like to have a happy and wholesome family?" I doubt that it would even cross our minds to stop and pray about receiving such good things. Then, when he asks us to be involved in his great work, especially if it may stretch us or in any way inconvenience us, we are compelled to pray.

Some years ago I asked a lady in our church if she would do something for me and she said, "Sure." I said, "Well, don't say 'yes' yet, you don't even know what I am going to ask you." She said, "Well, if you didn't think I could do it you wouldn't ask me, and if I can do it, I will be more than happy to."

I do not want to diminish the importance of prayer in seeking and doing the will of God, but I would caution that it is not necessarily a good thing to pray asking God, "How can I get out of this?"

**Number One: "If you can't get anybody else to do it, I will."** Arguably that is the worst answer you can give to a nominating committee. Why is it such a bad answer? For one thing, it sends the committee back to work concerning that same position and now they do not know whether you want to

do it, or can do it, or don't want to do it, or refuse to do it. Then they spend many more hours and too much energy wondering about you and worrying whether you really don't want to do it or whether you really do and simply want to be begged.

The main reason it is such a bad answer is because if they don't get anyone and they do give it to you, they apparently are assigning a task to someone whose heart is not in it. If you have a warm body in place and the organizational slots are filled, what difference does it make?

It makes all the difference in the world as to the spirit and attitude with which you serve. Why do you think that the instructions in God's word are, "Serve the Lord with gladness, come before his presence with singing?" Because, God wants us to serve joyfully. It makes a difference in the way we serve and I can assure you, it makes a difference to him.

So what can you do to help the nominating committee? To begin with you can already be praying, asking God to guide you and to guide the committee so that what the Lord wants done in you and for you will already be in progress. Then, when asked to serve, if at all possible, be ready to answer "Yes."

While on the Damascus road Saul, soon to be Paul, was only saved a few short minutes when he asked, "Lord, what would thou have me to do?" To the hundreds of nominating committee members across our convention, "Thank you!" To the thousands who will be asked to join in Kingdom service and who are ready and willing to say yes, "God richly bless your heart!"

To those who know the Lord but do not want to do anything in his Kingdom's service, I apologize for giving you three real good, bad answers.

## Korean tapped to lead BWA

DRESDEN, Germany (BP) — Asian Baptist leader Billy Jang Hwan Kim, pastor of the 7,000-member Central Baptist Church in Suwon, South Korea, and immediate past president of the Asian Baptist Federation (ABF), has been nominated by the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) General Council to serve as BWA president from 2000-2005.

The council, in its July 11-17 meetings in Dresden, Germany, unanimously voted to nominate Kim for election at the 18th BWA Congress, Jan. 5-9, 2000, in Melbourne, Australia, where it is expected he will succeed current President Nilso do Amral Fanini of Brazil in July of that year.

Morris H. Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee in Nashville, was one of sixteen vice presidential nominees also proposed to represent the BWA globally with Kim.



# O'Brien leaves WMU missions a 'vital force'

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Favorite quotes from Dellanna O'Brien abound. For future-lookers, it might be "God is not finished with us yet," a hopeful defense against discouraging thoughts.

For current-events watchers, it might be the question, "Where are the peacemakers?" asked as Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) launched its anti-violence emphasis.

For the ministry-minded, it might be "Some places are so dangerous, only a woman can go there," a quote borrowed from inner-city pastor Ray Bakke.

O'Brien's words — and the life they represent — have been a source of encouragement and challenge to her friends and co-workers and spurred many others to join her in devoting their lives to God's mission.

On Sept. 1, O'Brien will retire after 10 years as executive director of WMU. She and her husband Bill will continue to live in Birmingham, Ala., where WMU is headquartered.

O'Brien has served at the helm of WMU in interesting times. The Southern Baptist Convention has undergone a sweeping restructuring, with almost every SBC entity being significantly reorganized, and relationships between them newly designed. In local churches, patterns of attendance have shifted, with Christian education becoming more diversified.

Yet buoyed by O'Brien's spirit of leadership, WMU has remained the voice for missions education in the local church. A series of new initiatives have been added to WMU's missions education lineup to involve the whole church in missions.

WMU's relationships with the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board remain solid. Gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering continue to reach record levels.

WMU's governing board, drawn from its state-level organizations, is vibrant and strong — and WMU's 111-year-old commitment to missions is still being quietly carried out by legions of praying, giving, teaching, and ministering women in the church, women who make up the fabric of WMU.

O'Brien's strong mettle has undoubtedly made a difference in the missions world.

Wanda Lee, national WMU president since 1996, remembers the first time she met O'Brien. "She stood for hours at a reception in her honor, and never tired of hugs, handshakes and repeated introductions. I was impressed by her warmth, sense of humor, and genuine love for people. Women from across the country connected instantly with her."

O'Brien's predecessor, Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, believes O'Brien's perspective as a missionary, educator, and devoted mother and grandmother made her ideal to lead WMU.

"In a unique way she has used WMU as a vital force in missions education for the sake of missions, rather than for the sake of WMU," Crumpler said. First and foremost, O'Brien's decisions have been for the sake of lost souls around the world — souls that await the telling of the good news, Crumpler added.

Carolyn Miller served as national WMU president from 1991-96, facing with O'Brien a number of key challenges.

"I have heard Dellanna say many times that we spent more time with each other than with our husbands!" Miller jokes. "Because of this togetherness, I came to see that she is the same committed Christian no matter what the circumstances. Even though undesirable things came her way, her Christlike spirit never wavered. Her strength came from the fact that she knew she was in the will of God and that he would always guide her steps."

O'Brien has kept WMU moving forward with determination. She has traveled across the country and around the world, encouraging the work of missionaries and, in particular, women involved in missions. She has challenged WMU leaders to study the needs of a changing world and develop ministries to help Christians meet those needs.

One example happened in 1993, when O'Brien and several WMU leaders took an "urban plunge" in Chicago, learning of ministry needs in the city. Then they visited Appalachia to identify causes and effects of hunger in the United States. In

these two very different environments, the urgent situation of women in poverty — primarily single parents and welfare recipients — raised the same haunting question: Isn't there something we can do?

Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) was born out of that heartfelt question. A ministry of WMU, CWJC not only provides job and life skills for women in need, but also a caring mentor, Bible study, and a chance to know Jesus Christ.

Praised by Vice President Al Gore and Texas Gov. George Bush, CWJC has raised enthusiasm among Christian women who find it an exciting place to share their gifts. Growing from five pilot sites to some 100 ministry sites in 21 states and one international site, CWJC has helped hundreds of women move from dependency to self-sufficiency.

In her final address to the June WMU annual meeting in Atlanta, O'Brien once again encouraged her listeners to move forward.

"We are part of a seamless history in which we connect the stories of the past to write of our own chapters in preparation for those who come after us," she said. "May God keep you in his grace, love, joy, and wisdom."



O'Brien

## Pastors list their Sunday School realities, aspirations

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Pastors participating in leadership conferences July 19-23 at LifeWay Conference Center Ridgecrest (N.C.) acknowledged dissatisfaction with the state of Sunday School in their churches and shared their desires for a new strategy and new curriculum to be released in 2000.

"Sunday School for a New Century" conferences were sponsored by the Sunday School group of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Meeting in small groups and reporting their thinking to their peers at the North Carolina conference center, pastors agreed that Sunday School strategy and curriculum must be refocused to return to a meaningful marriage of Bible study and evangelism.

Among the common characteristics that emerged from examining the realities of Sunday School in their home churches were:

- A stated desire to focus outward, but, in practice, a con-

sistently inward focus, with little real indication of change.

- Homogenous membership, with little socioeconomic variety and closed social communities within the congregation.

- Static classes with traditional teaching, lack of outreach, and lack of commitment to purpose.

- Plateaued growth, with large classes of persons who are satisfied with the status quo.

- Teachers whose understanding of their role is teaching only.

Topping a list of their desires for Sunday School in the 21st century was flexibility in time and location for smaller groups, based on the realities of work weeks that do not always permit persons to participate in Sunday morning church activities. Other commonly discussed hopes were:

- Lessons that are transforming and that are applied by

the teacher and the members after the lesson is studied.

- Teachers who break out of traditional roles to new understandings about outreach and ministry for the group.

- An openness to new people, including the unchurched, along with a focus on beginning new units.

- A strategy rather than a program.

- A family focus.

- High-tech options for teaching styles and resources.

Ken Marler, a consultant in LifeWay's Sunday School group, told participants the 21st Century design for Sunday School includes the biblical mandate for building Great Commission Christians through transformational Bible study, partnering with parents in biblical instruction, developing leaders whose lives are a living example of the lesson, and understanding the

essential partnership of Sunday School and evangelism.

Defining transformational Bible study as "helping people live God's Word," he urged participants to "pray that your church will be spiritually transformed."

Sunday School for a New Century will include two curriculum series for each age group. The new series, "Family Bible Study," will offer 91 choices and will include curriculum for all age groups based on a common Bible study theme.

Additionally, LifeWay is launching a new undated curriculum series for youth, "LifeTrak," and a second dated curriculum series for children and preschoolers, "Bible Foundations."

The "Explore the Bible Series" for adults and two undated resources for high school seniors and sixth-graders will continue to be available.

The Life & Work Series, the Youth Explore the Bible Series, and the Family Bible Series will be discontinued.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



Youth choir of Navilla Church, McComb

Youth choir of Navilla Church, McComb, presented a musical program on June 13. The program entitled, "The Ultimate, Extreme, Revival Generation — (25)" was compiled various youth music collections. Pictured (from left, back row) are Will Wright, Blake Freeman, Lee Peoples, Jonathan Linton, Brent Freeman, Chris Mercier, Adam Greer, Wes Gaskin; (second row) Lawrence White (director) Megan Berry, Carla Linton, Paige Dickerson, Amy Freeman, Amanda Peoples (assistant director and accompanist); (front row) Courtney Slaughter, Jana Wright, and Brittney White.

Several churches in Gulf Coast and Jackson associations will join together in the presentation of "God For Us," a worship musical, on Aug. 20 at First Church, Gulfport. It will be directed by Stan Loyd, minister of music of First Church, Pascagoula. Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be the guest narrator.

**Mike Alexander**, evangelist from McComb, has recently accepted the pastorate of **Adrian Church**, Adrian, Ga. He is a graduate of **William Carey College** and **New Orleans Seminary**. Alexander previously served churches in Mississippi and Louisiana and also served as a chaplain with Hospice of Central Mississippi.

**Oakvale Church**, Oakvale, has called **Randy Gardner** as pastor effective July 18. He previously served at Old Hebron Church, Covington/Jeff Davis Association.

dish lunch at noon and ending around 1:30 p.m. Southside Church was located in Hattiesburg for approximately 30 years. For further information, call (228) 831-5501.

Youth members of Auburn Church, Tupelo, with Terry



**Mt. Olive Church**, Baldwyn, **Prentiss Association**, went to Fairhaven Church, Middletown, Delaware, for Missions '99. Twenty-three adults and youth made the trip. They held three Backyard Bible Clubs (simultaneously), did evangelism (hung 970 door hangers in various new housing areas), and cleanup in low-income area of the town. Those making the trip (kneeling from left) were Katie Morgan, Jessica Chism, Brandon Speck, Will Davis, Marsha Price, Allison Dugger, and Adam, Kim, and Chester Chism; (standing) Howard Benjamin, Billy Roberts, Kathy Chism, Betty Roberts, William Smith, Brittany Pittman, Shannon Patrick, Alana Speck, James and Amanda Smith, Demi Vegas, Kristi Massey, and Rhonda Lansdell.

### STAFF CHANGES

**First Church**, Florence, has called **A. V. Windham Jr.**, as minister of education effective July 1. A native of Bay Springs, Windham received his educa-

tion at William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Southside Church, Jackson.

### HOMEcomings

**D'LO (Simpson)**: Aug. 15; 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, 12:15 p.m.; Larry Chavis, former pastor, guest speaker; Jeff Sanders, D'LO Church, music; Robert Sones, pastor.

**Arkadelphia**, **Arkadelphia**: Aug. 15; 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch in fellowship hall; Carless Evans, guest speaker, celebrates his 50th anniversary in the ministry this year, Arkadelphia was his first church; David Waits, pastor.

**Galilee First**, Gloster: Aug. 15; fifth celebration for

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Mission team from Auburn Church, Tupelo

Ramey, youth minister and five chaperones took a construction mission trip to Ocoee River Ministries,

Benton, Tenn. The members stayed at Camp A'Gape where they built a sidewalk made of stone (gathered by the group from up the mountain). The group also added to the cafeteria foundation for expansion, ran electrical wiring and lights, and hung 68 sheets of Sheetrock at the New Copper Basin Crisis Center Building where clothes and food are provided for the needy. Pictured (bottom row, from left) are Andy Jordan, director, Camp A'Gape; Kim Bradley; Ramey; Shannon Estes; Amber Farris; Casey Farris; Trey Robertson; Cathy Bradley; Dawn Bradley, chaperone; (second row) Donney Pearce and Daletha Richey, chaperones; Matt Deibler and his wife, leaders, Camp A'Gape; Ron Bradley; Kirk Green; John Mark Webb; Jenny Gregory; Davis O'Neal; Rob Bucci; James Conley, chaperone; Brady Conley; (top row) McCain Pearce; Billy Kyle; Donnie Ratliff, chaperone; Caleb Ramey; and Justin Alred.

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## VBS RESULTS



VBS at Shivers Church, Simpson Association

Shivers Church (Simpson): June 14-18; 42 attendance; 2 baptized; Pat Nations, pastor.

Bissell Church, Tupelo: July 12-16; 116 enrolled; average attendance, 78; 1 profession of faith.



VBS at Thrasher Church, Prentiss Association

Thrasher Church, Prentiss Association: June 7-14; average attendance, 96; Sandy Johnson, coordinator; Kevin Merritt, pastor.

First Church, Brandon, celebrated with Mountain Extreme Backyard Bible Clubs for Vacation Bible School, June 14-18. Ten homes hosted the clubs in Brandon with 547 children in attendance.



Richard Powell, former pastor of Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, "climbs to new heights" as he challenges boys and girls at VBS. Enrolled were 1,119 with an average attendance of 951 and a mission offering of \$3,000.



Morrison Heights Church, Clinton: June 7-11; over 225 children presented the musical on Friday night; grades 1-6 collected over \$1,850 for missionaries from the church going on trips this summer.



VBS at First Church, Brandon

## WMU hosts women's prayer retreat

The 1999 North Mississippi Women's Prayer Retreat will be held September 10-11 at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko. The theme will be "When Gifts are Transformed."

The Bible study facilitator will be native Mississippian

Deborah Brunt, who currently serves as Women's Missions and Ministries Specialist for Oklahoma Baptists. Brunt has written three books, over 600 articles, and is currently a newspaper columnist and contributing editor for "Journey," a women's devotional magazine.

The missions facilitator will be Paula Smith, missionary to Uruguay, currently on stateside assignment at First Church, Greenwood.

Registration will begin at 4 p.m. on Friday followed by dinner, worship, and Bible study. Saturday's activities, which include prayer groups, breakfast, worship, Bible study, lunch, and worship, will conclude at 2:30 p.m. The cost for the event is \$30, which includes

registration fee, lodging, and three meals. Each participant needs to bring

linens and towels.

Checks should be made out to MBCB and mailed to WMU, Women's Prayer Retreat, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please include

name, address, telephone number, church, association, and contact person. For more information, contact Kathy Burns at (601) 292-3324 or (800) 748-1651.



Brunt

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## Emeritus missionary Dozier dies

RICHMOND, Va. — Mary Ellen Wiley Dozier, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to Japan, died July 29, 1999. She was 91. Born in Unionville, N.C., Dozier and her husband, Edwin, were appointed by the International Mission Board as missionaries to Japan in 1933. She taught oral English at Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka and taught Bible classes in Taguma Baptist Church. Her husband, who died in 1969, was chancellor of Seinan Gakuin, an institution founded by his father, missionary C.K. Dozier. The Doziers worked with Japanese-speaking people in Hawaii during World War II and returned to Japan after the war to do administrative and evangelistic work in Tokyo and Fukuoka. She retired in 1974. She was a graduate of Mississippi Woman's College (now William Carey College) in Hattiesburg, and Woman's Missionary Union Training School (later merged with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) in Louisville, Ky. Prior to missionary appointment, she worked for First Church in Reidsville, N.C., and taught school in Sugar Grove, N.C. She is survived by two daughters, Adelia Dozier of Decatur, Ga., and Sarah Mamlin of Indianapolis, Ind.; and one son, Charles Dozier of Prince Frederick, Md.

# IMB seeks African-American missionaries

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — "WANTED: African-American Southern Baptists willing to follow God's call to go anywhere overseas as international missionaries."

That message was repeated over and over the week of July 24-29 during the first-ever International Missions Week at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico.

"The Bible doesn't say, 'Go into the world, you white folks,'" said David Cornelius, African-American liaison for the International Mission Board (IMB). "The Bible is addressed to all of us who know Christ."

Cornelius spoke to a mostly African-American group of about 50 who attended week-day sessions designed to mobilize more African-American college and university students for overseas missions projects. He told them the IMB's doors are "wide open" to African-Americans willing to go overseas and do missions.

African-American Southern Baptists can serve anywhere in the world, he said, disputing stereotypes of sending them only to African nations.

Missionaries are "the most effective motivators in the African-American community for getting persons to consider cross-cultural missions [following the call from God]," said Cornelius, who served overseas before moving to the IMB's home office staff in Richmond, Va.

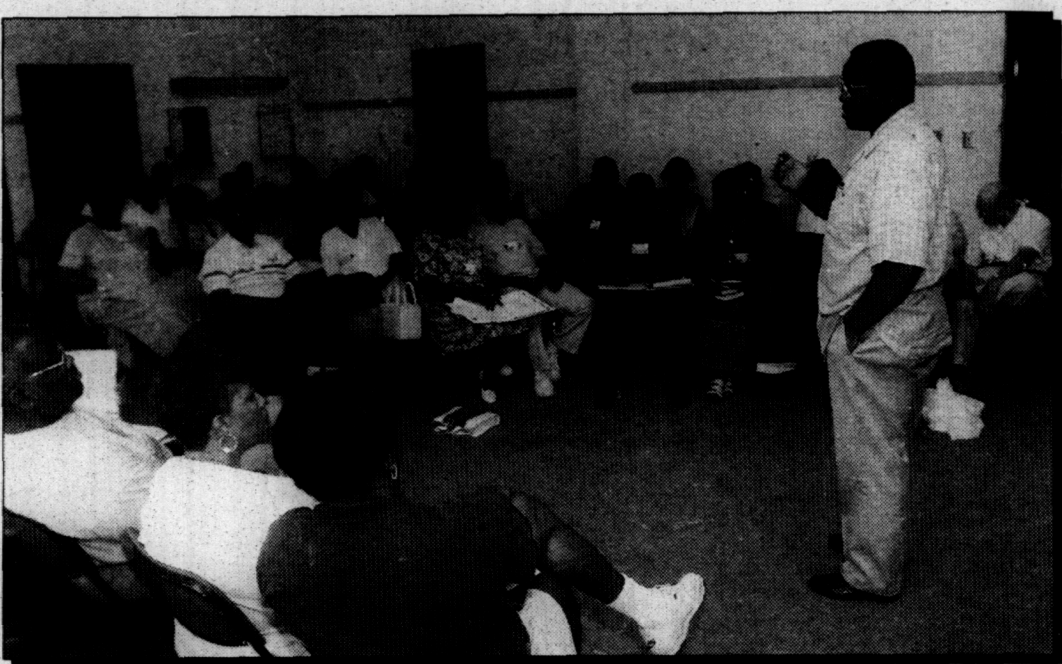
Two recent studies indicated

46% of 101 missionaries mentioned missionaries as primary motivators, he said. "The most effective tool for motivating African-Americans toward involvement in cross-cultural missions was (found to be) missions education indicated by 54% of respondents."

"The most effective missions education method for motivating African-Americans toward a career in cross-cultural missions was found to be short-term mission trips (stated by 23% of respondents), followed closely by the use of African American recruiters (16%) and exposure to missions and missionaries (15%)," Cornelius said.

"Finally, pastors, college and seminary professors, and churches probably play a smaller role in promoting engagement in cross-cultural missions in the black Christian community than in the white Christian community," he said.

Currently, only 19 of the IMB's 4,600 missionaries are African-American, compared



OPEN DOORS — International Mission Board staff member David Cornelius leads a session on how to get more African-Americans involved in missions during International Missions Week at Glorieta, a LifeWay conference center in New Mexico. (BP photo by Roy M. Burroughs)

with 50 Hispanic and 137 Asian missionaries.

Yet even this number of African-Americans has grown significantly in the past five years, Cornelius said.

Cornelius also cited various reasons African-American Southern Baptists don't go overseas as missionaries, including:

- ◆ Ethnocentricity, in which African-Americans focus on only their own people.
- ◆ The IMB's and other

white-administered missions agencies' need for more African-American recruiters.

◆ The perceived risk to one's physical well-being as well as personal finances.

◆ A fear of not being able to relate to white missionaries already overseas.

Cornelius urged those attending his seminar to return home and spread the word that African-Americans are welcome to become international missionaries.

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

**Survival Weekend '99**, hosted by William Carey College Baptist Student Union (BSU) will take place Aug. 13-15, prior to the beginning of classes on the Hattiesburg campus. Registration will begin in the Student Center Aug. 13 at 4:30 p.m. It is open to all new freshman and transfer students. The College Student Conference (CSC) will be held Sept. 24-26 at Colonial Heights Church in Jackson. For more information about BSU activities contact Tim Glaze at (601) 582-6161 or 1-800-962-5991, ext. 161.

**General registration** for students entering William Carey College will be held Aug. 13 on the Hattiesburg campus. New

students will begin the registration process in the admissions office located in Tatum Court. Returning students will begin the registration process in the advisor's office in the department of their major. For more information, call (601) 582-6208 or 1-800-962-5991, ext. 208.

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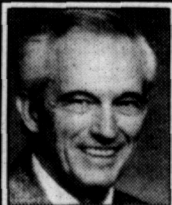
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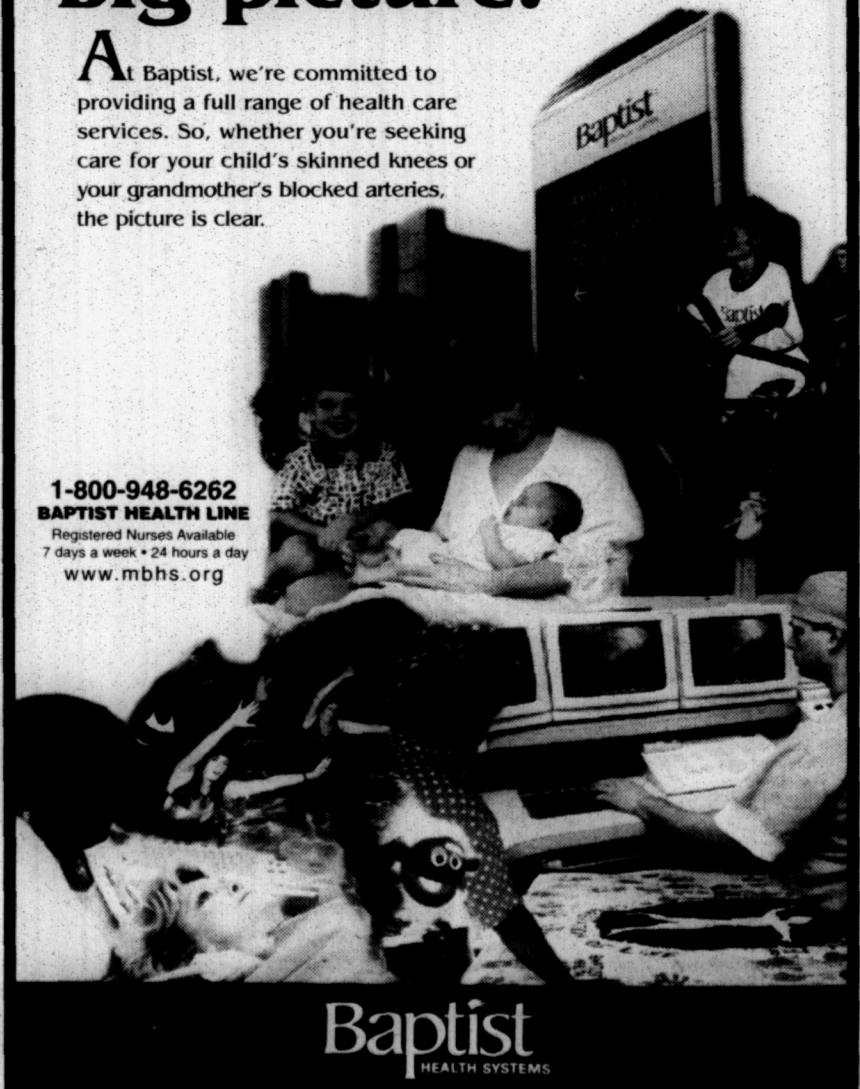
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## ATTACKS ON VALUES

Editor:

Attacks against Mississippi's Bible Belt values have played out this year in a Tupelo court room. Clay McDonald, a Republican candidate for sheriff in Lee County, had custody of his two youngest daughters, now three and 12 years old, after his wife moved in with her lesbian lover. Clay provided special care to the three-year-old, who was born with diabetes.

In a visitation hearing on June 25, Clay faced his wife, a New York lawyer with the ACLU Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and a lawyer from Oxford. Having already been assessed \$25,000 in legal fees, Clay represented himself before an appointed chancery judge. In the midst of the proceedings, the judge ordered a deputy to pick up Clay's children and bring them to court. The judge then gave Clay's ex-wife and her lesbian companion temporary custody of the children until another hearing, which he set for Aug. 3, election day.

Clay lost his election bid by 27 votes and was silenced in court

three times by the judge who conducted a carefully scripted hearing in which he left the children with the mother, ordered Clay to pay \$600 a month in child support, and to pay his ex-wife's attorney \$750 in legal fees. The judge was obviously unhappy that Clay had sued him in federal court, after Clay had tried in vain to find relief from the state Supreme Court. I hope that someone in our judicial system will look into this case.

David T. Dockery III  
Clinton

## GET PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

Editor:

At the just completed Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), a vote was taken to emphasize starting new church-

es in a number of American cities, especially focusing on reaching minority populations in those cities. I think our priorities are way off from what they should be.

Most of these cities have many Baptist churches already operating in them, though they may be affiliated with the American Baptist Churches in the USA ("northern Baptists") or the National Baptist Convention (the black Baptists). Just because they don't have Southern Baptist churches does not mean they are unevangelized.

By contrast, the latest edition of the IMB publication "The Commission" points out that in Spain alone, for instance, "15,000,000 people live in towns with no evangelical witness at all." France and Belgium, it is

pointed out, have more practicing Muslims than practicing "Christians" of all denominations. Only 3% of Germans attend any church, and less than one Austrian in every 300 is born again. Yet, we are more interested in making sure there's one of our type of Baptists in every major city neighborhood in America than in reaching these people, for every year missionary candidates for the foreign field are turned down by the SBC on some grounds or another because funds are limited.

We need to get our spiritual priorities straight and start concentrating on competing with the devil and unbelief instead of with our fellow Baptist groups in America.

J. C. Brady  
Port Gibson

# NOBTS announces Jackson courses

New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) is offering education and Bible classes in their certificate program and in undergraduate program this fall at Broadmoor Church in Jackson.

Registration for the certificate program is Aug. 23 at 7 p.m. at Broadmoor Church. The cost for each certificate course is \$75 for Baptists and \$150 for non-Baptists. There is

also a one-time application fee of \$25.

Classes for the first term begin August 23 and are held each Monday evening from 7-9 p.m. through Oct. 11. Classes for the second term begin Oct. 18 and go through Dec. 13. Term I classes are on Baptist church programs. Term II classes are on church administration.

The NOBTS College of Undergraduate Studies is offering three classes for the fall semester. Registration is Aug. 23 at 1 p.m. at Broadmoor Church. The cost for each undergraduate course is \$285 for Baptists and \$570 for non-Baptists. There is a one-time application fee of \$25.

Classes for the fall semester begin Aug. 23 and are held each Monday at 1 p.m., 4 p.m., and 7 p.m. through Dec. 23. Course offerings are: Integrating Academics and Ministry at 1 p.m.; The Work of the Pastor at 4 p.m.; and Old Testament Survey at 7 p.m. These courses can be counted as credit toward earning an associate degree from NOBTS.

For more information about the certificate program or the undergraduate program at the Broadmoor extension center, contact NOBTS at (504) 286-3590; or in Jackson, Julius C. Thompson at (601) 856-4341.

## REVIVAL DATES

**North Morton, Morton:** beginning Aug. 22, 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, evangelist.

**Zion Hill (Copiah):** Aug. 22-26; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 6:45 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; W. D. "Step" Martin, evangelist;

Price Harris, music; Tom McCormick, pastor.

**First, Ocean Springs:** Aug. 13-15; Fri., 7 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, 8:30 and 11 a.m.; Robert Coleman, Trinity International University in

Deerfield, Ill., evangelist; Larry Futral, First Church, music on Fri. and Sat.; Gerald and Cindy Simmons, Gulfport, music on Sunday.

**Souenlovie (Clarke):** Aug. 15-18; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Clay Chancellor, evangelist; C. C. Burns, music.

**Sebastopol, Sebastopol:** Aug. 22-26; Sunday, regular services, lunch following morning worship service; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Randy Hales, guest speaker; Pam Carlisle, music for Sunday services; Jasper Butler, Brandon, music, Mon.-Thurs.; David Sartin, pastor.

**Bethel, Holcomb:** Aug. 23-29; 7 p.m. nightly; ice cream supper following services on Saturday; Paul O. Lee, Minette, Ala., evangelist; Barry Worrell, Grenada, music; Jeanette Harris Selby and Ray Mattox, organ and piano; William B. McDaniel, pastor.

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Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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# Day trading just another form of gambling

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The game doesn't involve rolling dice or dealing cards, but day-trading is gambling by any other name, a host of experts on the stock market say.

Day-trading — the high-pressure avocation of Mark Barton, who killed his wife and two children and then nine people in two Atlanta investment firms July 29 before committing suicide — is the rapid-fire buying and selling of shares of stock to capture small upward ticks in stock prices to seize quick and sizable financial gains.

"These traders don't bet on who's gonna win a race; they bet on who's gonna be in the lead after half a lap," mused Jerry Knight of washingtonpost.com in an on-line discussion July 30.

The meteoric rise in volatile Internet stocks like Yahoo and Amazon.com has made it easy for many to seek quick profits in intense direct-access trading sessions. Stock analysts indicate many of the wild swings common among such technology stock offerings can be traced to trading by these rebels who shun traditional Wall Street admonitions to buy and hold for the long term.

"Day-trading offers risk-takers one more way to risk everything for the big score," said Barrett Duke, an authority on gambling for the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC). "The day-trader expects to make large sums of cash in an extremely short period of time by betting on the mood of the market. While that's not as reckless as betting on a number on a roulette table, it is, nevertheless, gambling."

"We call it the gambling addiction of the new millennium," Edward Looney, executive director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, said in USA Today Aug. 2. Day-trading is "fertile ground for dangerous compulsions," Looney said, "because day traders place big bets on small, short-term swings in stock prices."

With the lure of instant wealth has come a flood of eager investors who post large amounts of cash as surety in transactions with no consideration for the value underlying a stock, instead being consumed with its potential for upward movement.

The feverish compulsion to beat the odds—getting in and out of a stock purchase at exactly the right moment—remains insatiable. One industry research group estimates that on-line trading has more than tripled since 1996 and will nearly triple again by the year 2002. On-line trading accounts for 14% of all equity transactions in the market, reports www.thestreet.com, an Internet investors' daily.

Valerie Lorenz, director of the Compulsive Gambling

Center in Baltimore, in the USA Today story Aug. 2, compared day-trading to slot machines: "It's fast action, constant action, total involvement, and there is an immediate payoff. It's pure gambling. When they lose, it is not just a loss of money, it is a loss of self-esteem and self-assurance."

Just as the gambler who travels to the casino cackles he has developed the strategy to beat the house, the attraction of effortless wealth in the trading of securities is intoxicating. It is the better-educated, more affluent traders who think they come with "a strategy, a protocol, a methodology to this day trading that will inoculate them from risk or extreme loss," said James Marlen, a Dallas securities lawyer in The Wall Street Journal Aug. 2.

Yet reality argues otherwise. Most traders lose money. USA Today reported a complaint filed by the state of Massachusetts against Block Trading, a firm catering to day-traders, alleged that only one of 68 accounts in the firm's Boston office was profitable.

Wall Street patrons insist there is a big difference between the efforts of day-

traders to ride the minute-by-minute gains of a particular stock to overnight prosperity and the labors of traditional stockbrokers to build profitable portfolios for the long haul.

for the long term in companies that demonstrate the promise of sound financial growth."

Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Arthur Levitt Jr., told The Washington Post in a July 31 article,

"Personally, I don't think day traders are speculating because traditional speculation requires some market knowledge. They are instead gambling, which doesn't."

Day-trading has transformed the stock market into "an invisible nationwide casino where [traders] can play the odds without having to venture to Atlantic City or Las Vegas," reported the Feb. 25 Washington Post.

"These people are not investors. They're gamblers," stated

Robert Bontempo, an associate professor of management at Columbia University's business school, in the Aug. 2 Wall Street Journal.

"Calling this investment is totally missing the point," Bontempo said. "It's a casino and to be surprised when greedy, desperate people lose all their money, and then snap, I mean who are we kidding? Why should we be surprised by that?" he asked.



## Saudi Arabia rated most repressive

WASHINGTON (BP) — Saudi Arabia is the world's most repressive country for Christians, according to a new report by an organization that ministers to the persecuted church.

Open Doors International (ODI) rated the Middle East regime first, followed by Afghanistan, Sudan, China, Yemen, Morocco, Iran, Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt.

The world watch list, as it is titled by ODI, is compiled from a questionnaire completed by the organization's staff, experts on the country, travelers, and contacts in the country. The topics on which the ratings are based include the legal status of Christians, the attitude of the regime, the freedom of the church to organize events, and the treatment of individual believers.

The list is available at ODI's website, www.solcon.nl/odi. Reports on persecution, as well as links to other organizations dealing with the issue, are available at the Internet site of the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. The address is www.persecutedchurch.org.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Munro, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*My husband takes better care of his brand-new SUV (sport utility vehicle) than he does me. I'm developing a roving eye. Help!*

Sit down and talk with your husband, but first do some preparation. Plan the conversation instead of allowing your frustration to sound like an angry indictment. He may not be aware of the hurt he is causing. Encourage him to explain why he enjoys his SUV so much, and describe your feelings of abandonment. In a calm manner, let him know exactly what you are sensing from his actions. Pray that the Lord will reveal his idolatry to him, and that he will be convicted of this sin and turn away from it. As for the "roving eye," follow the biblical

models for marriage and being a wife, and watch what God will do in your life—and his.

*I was devastated to learn from my new wife that a botched abortion several years ago left her infertile. Is it fair for me to have expected her to share that information with me before we married?*

Yes, it would have been fair, but that's not the reality now, is it? Although Christians have been forgiven their sins through the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, we often have to live with the consequences of past sins. Such is the case in your marriage. You have an opportunity to grant her the forgiveness and redemption

that has been granted to you on a much greater scale through God's sacrifice of his Son. As your hopes for the future have been greatly affected, this process will not be easy—but it can be very fulfilling in the long run. Choose to go deeper in your communication and intimacy. If you don't, this issue will separate the two of you. She needs your understanding and support. You need time to grieve and heal. Go to the Lord together in prayer. Time with your pastor or a Christian counselor would be well spent. Don't allow Satan to gain a foothold; seek ways to deepen your love and commitment to each other, and see this as an opportunity to strengthen your vows.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Dealing with criticism

2 Cor. 10:1-11:29

By Ted Dukes

Have you ever noticed the common squirrel? I was watching them play in my back yard the other day, jumping from limb to limb, climbing to dizzying heights, running up and down the tree trunks.

Occasionally one would make a terrific leap from one tree to another. I actually held my breath in fear one might fall, but none of the little squirrels ever did, nor did it seem to ever enter their minds that they could.

I found myself envying their self-confidence, admiring their fearlessness, wondering what it

would be like to take chances like that.

In some ways the Apostle Paul possessed a squirrel's courage. He leaped from limb to limb with a confidence and boldness that could only have come from God. The things he wrote to the churches were occasionally scathing, and his leadership was not always well received.

In Corinth Paul's detractors had a lot to gain by defaming his character and a lot to lose should the church catch sight of the devil's puppet strings and realize the sin of their treacherous rebellion.



Dukes

Knowing he was being constantly undermined by people who would not rest until he was neutralized, the Apostle revealed the naked truth of the conflict — this is a spiritual battle (10:3-6)!

Those same brave squirrels scampered into the trees as soon as I made my appearance, because they were afraid of me. They could not know how much I love animals and how little they had to fear from me.

Some of the Corinthian Christians may have relegated the conflict in their church to the physical realm and assumed it was nothing more than a battle of egos and issues because such a definition fits naturally and comfortably into our understanding of the world.

We can handle it if it is of the flesh, but to suggest that this is a fight to bring into captivity those things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God (1 Cor. 15:34) is enough to frighten and intimidate most Christians. Paul urged them not to look merely to the outward appearance (10:7), but to look deeper for the truth.

There were cliques of religious people in the church at Corinth who, never looking outside their own narrow circles, became inflated with a sense of their own importance. They felt threatened by Paul's message of reaching out and cooperating with other Christians in other places and participating in the work of the Gospel in ways other than their own familiar paradigm.

These people found their rationale and justification by measuring their motives and

actions by human standards. They commended themselves (10:12), and assumed the liberty to intrude and lay down the law as they understood it.

It was a mixture of selfishness, Pharisaism, and conceit, and we need look no further than our own local churches to see examples of this kind of thinking today.

Assuming he was writing to at least one person in the church who understood the nature of the battle and the motivations of his accusers, Paul encouragingly affirmed, "We will not indulge in these immeasurable boastings or glory beyond our measure" (10:13, 15).

May God teach us to be content to stand in his shadow that we might not be blinded by the son of the morning (Is. 14:12)!

*Dukes is pastor of First Church, Crystal Springs.*

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Family heartbreak

Genesis 37:1-35

By Grant Arinder

In case your Bible is not sitting beside you, let me set the scene. Today's passage recounts the events that lead up to Joseph being thrown in a cistern and eventually sold as a slave by his brothers.

The passage reveals that Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons and how this favoritism was the root of sibling rivalry and jealousy. The jealousy became more pronounced as Joseph shared his dreams of how his brothers would bow down to him.

As it does with us, jealousy unchecked became anger; anger unchecked became hatred and rage. Thus, the

brothers devise a tragic plot. However, God fashions a triumphant plan. It is amazing how God can turn our tragedies into triumphs.

Many years ago when I was a young boy going through one of the many struggles of adolescence, my wise mother taught me a spiritual lesson that I have not forgotten. Today's passage reminds me of her sage advice.

In a nutshell, my mom reminded me that our perspective and God's perspective are totally different. During difficult times, she explained that we only see our immediate context, the wrong we have suffered, the loss we feel, or per-



Arinder

haps the pain we are enduring.

Mom reminded me, with a story from her own life experience, that God can see around the curves and over the hills and beyond the bumps that are causing us pain. Not only can he see the place beyond our struggles, but may even be using our struggles to take us to this place of greater blessing.

One of the greatest things about the God we serve is his ability to turn even the greatest tragedies into triumphs.

**Human tragedy (vv. 3-11).** It is important to note that the tragedy in this story is purely human. God did not necessarily intend for Jacob to love Joseph more than any of his other sons. He also did not plan the jealousy and discord that arose between the brothers. He certainly did not want Joseph's brothers to treat him in an evil way.

In 42:21-23 we see the brothers express remorse and guilt because of their actions. They are well aware of their sin. The tragedy in the story is human and should not be traced to God. What should be traced to God is the triumph he fashions in spite of the tragedy.

**Divine triumph.** As my mom pointed out, God is busy making miracles out of our messes. Only God can turn our personal tragedies into triumphs.

Only God could take Joseph's blood-covered coat and make it a royal robe. Only God could take a prison cistern and make it a royal palace. Only God could take a slave and make him a king. Only God could turn a kiss of betrayal into a cross of forgiveness.

At the same time Joseph's brothers were plotting evil for him, God was plotting a blessing for them. At the same time

that his brothers were scheming to imprison Joseph, God was planning to free them. At the same time they were plotting to make Joseph a slave, God was planning to make him a king.

Today's lesson is a reminder to have faith when you have been treated unfairly, to have perseverance in the problems, to have strength in the struggles. Remember the type of God we serve. Even now he may be planning when others are plotting. God can and will take our tragedies and turn them into triumphs.

*God, thank you for taking our messes and fashioning miracles. Help us to recall that in the midst of our problems you are fashioning a plan. Help us to remember that even when we can't see around the curves and over the hills that you can and you are preparing a way for us.*

*Arinder is pastor of First Church, Belzoni.*

## LIFE AND WORK

### The opportunity to believe

John 9:1-41

By Tony Martin

As a Christian, you came to a point in which your belief in Jesus Christ and his work on the cross was sufficient enough for you to cry out for mercy — "Jesus, I want you to save me."

So, what does it mean to believe in Jesus? For many, it's just an intellectual affirmation of historical facts. For others, it's just a personal belief in whatever works, a sort of custom designed, arbitrary faith. Even among those who have believed in Jesus, there is often confusion or uncertainty about what true belief really means.

People are looking for someone or something to believe in. Many have heard about belief in

Jesus but simply don't know what that means. In today's study, Jesus healed a man born blind. This

event was a turning point in the blind man's life, and in the lives of those who witnessed this miracle. What can we learn from this passage as we consider what belief in Jesus — saving belief — really means?

**Be aware of Jesus' care (vv. 8-11).** Jesus does care. In all the trials and circumstances of life, Jesus' love and concern for us should never be called into question. God is good, and what he does is always right. In these verses, Jesus has just shown his care by healing a man blind from birth. The



Martin

neighbors were stunned and plenty of questions arose, mostly along the lines of "was this really the blind man, and how did he get his sight back?"

The beggar insisted that yes, he was the man, and he simply described what had happened. The point is clear: Jesus cared about this man and was able to meet his needs. At

this point, the man hasn't been saved, but he has been healed. Salvation was his — and our — primary need, and the light was beginning to dawn on this blind man.

**Work through questions (vv. 17, 24-25).** Those poor Pharisees. They couldn't recognize truth if it bit them on the leg. While it would have been valid for them to have some hard questions, they were already so scripted in their beliefs about Jesus that all their questions were couched in hostile terms. They questioned the

blind man twice, and also interrogated his parents, trying to get a grasp on just what was going on. "He is a prophet," the man asserted.

Switching tactics, the Pharisees tried to get the man to say Jesus was a sinner. The man wouldn't bite, he confronted them with the plain fact of his vision.

Often, coming to grips with Jesus as Savior involves asking some hard questions. That's fine. An honest interaction with the truth will move those who are truly seeking toward a personal commitment.

**Recognize Jesus' uniqueness (vv. 30-33).** You go, ex-blind guy! In one of the great confrontations in scripture, and in what might even be considered appropriate sarcasm, he asked a telling question: How can a sinner heal a blind man? The Pharisees had been livid, trying to discount a miracle that was right before them. The man just bombarded the

Pharisees with withering logic: "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

Religious intolerants such as the Pharisees don't want to deal with facts or logic. Their minds were already made up. If they had honestly evaluated the facts, they would have had to come to the conclusion that Jesus was the Son of God.

**Make a decision (vv. 35-38).** Jesus found out that the religious leaders had expelled the healed man from the synagogue and moved to help him complete his understanding. The man believed what Jesus said and worshiped him in total belief.

The blind man's inner vision, as well as his physical vision, had been restored. He recognized Jesus as the light of the world. To become believers, people need to move beyond merely knowing about Jesus to making a personal decision to trust him as Lord.

*Martin is minister of education at First Church, McComb.*



# Special care needed for child's salvation

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — About the time a child realizes it's wrong to throw rocks at the neighbor's car, he also can begin thinking about accepting the truth of Jesus, a preschool/children's consultant said.

"When a child comes to the age of accountability — when he or she begins to know why something is right or wrong — that's the time we can start talking to them about salvation," Pamela Boucher told children's leaders at the National Conference for Church Leadership Aug. 2-6 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center. "One of the biggest issues regarding accountability is that children begin understanding the difference between right and wrong at very different ages," said Boucher, preschool/children's ministers consultant in the pastor-staff leadership department of LifeWay Christian Resources. "Some reach accountability at five, and some not until they're 15," she said.

Leading the seminar, "Talking with Children About Salvation," Boucher outlined appropriate Christian words and phrases to use with children and signs children display when the Holy Spirit begins to work in their lives.

Reaching children early with the Word of God is a critical step to evangelism, Boucher said. "Seventy-five percent of Christians made professions of faith before they reached age 16, and 50% of those did it by the time they were 12," she said.

"The early years of learning and teaching spiritual truths are important and valuable. The earlier we can expose children to the Scripture and the more often we can do it, the easier it will be for them to receive Christ when the time comes."

Boucher said creating a climate of faith at church helps children understand the meaning of salvation. She described an environment or climate of faith as one in which children learn about the love of Jesus.

"You can put pictures of Jesus on the walls and play hymns and Christian music

part of us that allows us to feel. Explain to them that sin means making a wrong choice or doing something that doesn't please God."

If a child does choose to publicly accept Jesus, an adult should determine if the child knows for certain what he or she is doing, Boucher advised.

"Ask them why they are coming forward and what they understand about it. Don't ask 'yes' or 'no' questions that are easy to answer.

"A lot of times their reason will be that they want to be baptized, and that's not good enough. We can't assume they know what they're doing."

Boucher said some sure signs children are moving closer to accepting Jesus as their Savior are:

- An increased level of desire and interest in Bible study or spiritual matters.

- An increased number of questions about the subject, such as "When can I take the Lord's Supper?"

"When can I be baptized?" "What is God really like?" "Is there really a God?"

- Exaggerated fears. "Suddenly they don't want to go to church or they are afraid of more things."

- A shift in behavior. "Calm passive children will turn into more aggressive children, and boisterous children will become more calm and contemplative," Boucher said.

"Every child will probably exhibit signs that are uniquely theirs. You just need to be aware of them," she cautioned.

The National Conference for Church Leadership is sponsored by the pastor-staff leadership department of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.



for the children. Of course, the greatest way for children to have a Christian environment is to have Christian parents and a Christian home. That means we must minister not just to the child, but to the entire family.

"The home environment can either help or hinder what we are trying to do at church," she said.

Tossing abstract "churchy" words at children may confuse them, Boucher said, noting, "Church words are very abstract and children are very concrete thinkers."

Some of the words or phrases that confuse children, she said, are "getting saved," "born again," "washed in the blood," "sin," "take the preacher's hand," and "give your heart to Jesus."

"You've got to take the time to explain what words mean. In this case, heart is the

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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NYLFLSKFL RS NYRDL  
LDLVI YTDPLF, SLLX YRV;  
RS YL NYRFAN, PRGL YRV  
XFRDW: SKF RD AK  
XKRDP NYKT AYQBN  
YLQM JKQBA KS SRFL KD  
YRA YLQX.

FKVQDA NCLBGL:NCLDNI

Clue: P = G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Acts Eleven: Sixteen.

## Churches closely watching N.J. Boy Scout lawsuit

TRENTON, N.J. (BP) — Churches which host Boy Scout troops, as well as leaders of the nation's pro-family movement, will be studying developments in a case — likely headed to the U.S. Supreme Court — in which the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled Aug. 4 that the Boy Scouts of America cannot exclude homosexuals from its programs, including leadership positions.

For now, the ruling applies only in New Jersey, yet among "the most ominous aspects of the opinion is what impact this would have on religious organizations," Jay Sekulow, head of the evangelical American Center for Law and Justice, told Baptist Press Aug. 5.

"The most pressing issue would be if you had a Christian church in New Jersey, and a Scout troop wants to meet there and they've got a homosexual in leadership," Sekulow said.

"It puts the church in an awkward spot," he said, "because the Boy Scouts are being forced to comply [with the ruling], but the church does not have to be associated with a

view that it would find offensive to its own doctrinal beliefs.

"This opinion does not give the authority to the state, through its anti-discrimination laws, to dictate to churches who can utilize their facilities and who cannot," Sekulow said.

The New Jersey court's 7-0 decision provides "clear and compelling evidence why we need the Religious Liberty Protection Act (RLPA) passed by Congress and signed into law," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. "RLPA would greatly strengthen the Boy Scout organization's position in saying that no state can undermine the free exercise of religious rights as guaranteed under the First Amendment and thus protected by the federal courts.

"If one needed proof that segments of our judicial system have taken collective leave of their senses, this decision by the New Jersey Supreme Court would be high on the list of evidence," Land said, assessing the decision as "rife with breathtak-

ingly dangerous assertions."

One key example, Land said, is "the assertion that the state has a 'compelling interest' in protecting the civil rights of those whose sexual preference is homosexual to the exclusion of the constitutional rights of free expression of another's religious convictions." That assertion, he said, "is almost beyond belief, even for an American court in the year of our Lord 1999."

The New Jersey ruling "turns morality on its head," Janet Parshall of the Family Research Council reacted to The Washington Post. The court is "forcing an organization designed around teaching virtue to accept the values of homosexual activists," Parshall said.

Sekulow, whose American Center for Law and Justice had filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case, told USA Today, "This is their biggest win so far and our biggest loss." It marks the first time a top state court has ruled against the Boy Scouts' ban on homosexuality. State courts previously had sided

with the Boy Scouts in similar cases, the newspaper recounted — in California, Connecticut, Kansas, and Oregon.

In California, the state Supreme Court unanimously ruled in the Boy Scouts' favor in March 1998, saying the organization is not a business and thus is free to exclude homosexuals, as well as atheists and agnostics, in cases which involved a homosexual Eagle Scout and 9-year-old twins who refused to declare a belief in God, the Associated Press and Washington Post recounted. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of the California ruling.

The New Jersey case began in 1990 when an Eagle Scout, James Dale, now 29 and living in New York City, was dismissed as an assistant scoutmaster after a local newspaper ran an article about a seminar he was leading on counseling homosexual teenagers. The Post recounted. Dale was identified as co-president of the Lesbian/Gay Alliance at Rutgers University, according to The New York Times.